



# NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

SUMMER EDITION, VOLUME 1



I would like to introduce the premiere edition of Bernalillo County's Neighborhood News. With summer in full swing, this edition features the Parks and Recreation Department and the variety of programs offered to children, adults and seniors.

Many new projects and programs are occurring under the leadership and management of the County. Here are just a few:

**The Community Services Division** is proud to announce the completion of the W.L. Jackson Park in North Albuquerque Acres, the grand opening of Los Padillas Aquatic Center, and the groundbreaking of the Valle del Bosque Park in the South Valley. In addition, the County will be purchasing and renovating the historic Hiland Theater for future use by arts and cultural organizations and the community.

**The Public Works Division** is completing the Golf Course Road project and commencing Phase II of Isleta Boulevard. The improvements will begin at Arenal/Goff and continue to Rio Bravo. The Solid Waste Department is introducing the Recycling Program this summer making it easy and convenient for residents to participate and help reduce the amount of waste generated.

**The Public Safety Division** will oversee construction of the new Psychiatric Unit at the Metropolitan Detention Center, which will relieve the overcrowding and provide necessary services. In addition, the County is pressing forward to open the MATS (Metropolitan Assessment and Treatment Facility), the first substance abuse rehabilitation public facility of its kind in New Mexico. Also, we continue to increase the number of fire personnel to ensure the protection of the members of the community and their property.

Finally, the construction of the Tempurpedic plant in Bernalillo County is well underway. The 700,000 square foot

facility is being built at a cost of \$56 million and the company will eventually provide 300 jobs. Bernalillo County is making progress in several areas while continuing to effectively meet the needs of our residents. Have a safe summer and stay cool.

*Alan B. Armijo, Chair  
Board of County Commissioners*

## ***Bernalillo County Imposes Fire Restrictions and Offers Safety Tips***

Bernalillo County officials want everyone to have a fun and safe summer. But in order to have fun, residents need to play it safe. Due to severe drought conditions and increased fire danger, Bernalillo County Commissioners have banned outdoor smoking, campfires, open burning and all fireworks in the East Mountains and within 1,000 feet of the bosque until at least July 14, 2005. Specifically, the ban covers land east of Tramway Boulevard to the west face of the Sandia Mountains, from San Antonio north to the Sandia Indian Reservation, all of the East Mountain region and property within 1000 feet of the Rio Grande Bosque and wild lands.

"The drought and the potential risk to life, property and the environment prompted us to take this measure," says County Commissioner Michael Brasher. "The safety of residents is always our top priority." If someone is caught violating the fire restrictions, a citation will be issued and they will have to appear in court. If it is determined that an individual caused a blaze that damaged property, they may be held liable for those damages. For more safety tips and other fire restriction guidelines, go the Bernalillo County website at [www.bernco.gov](http://www.bernco.gov), or call the Bernalillo County Fire Prevention Bureau at (505) 342-7921.

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***W. L. Jackson Park  
Bernalillo County Honors  
Renowned Sandia Heights Resident***

Bernalillo County held a dedication in July for the W.L. Jackson Park, one of the County's newest recreational areas. The 3.75-acre park, located at the southeast corner of Tramway and Cedar Hill Rd. NE, features a grass play area, sledding hill, walking trails, playground, shrubs and trees, and a drinking fountain. The park's namesake, William L. Jackson, was one of Sandia Heights' first residents, a well-known community leader and a Sandia Properties former employee. "Mr. Jackson enriched this community in so many ways," says County Commissioner Tim Cummins. "He helped build the tram, started the volunteer fire department, and operated and maintained the water well systems. It's a privilege to dedicate this beautiful park in his memory." Two



large lizard sculptures and three pottery shard benches adorn the park. The artwork entitled "Sandia Allegory" is the creation of

artist Don Kennell and funded by the County's Public Art Program. Bernalillo County purchased the park's property in 2000. Funding for construction came from legislative appropriations, the County General Obligation Bond, park impact fees, a donation from the Sandia Heights Homeowners Association, as well as a private donation.

Architect W. Paul Waters and engineer Guy Jackson, both of BPLW Architects & Engineers - ASCG Company and both from Sandia Heights, donated their time designing the plans. County officials say additional legislative funds will be used to build a basketball court, bocce court, and purchase and install park furnishings. Work on the remaining phase is scheduled to begin this fall.



***W. L. Jackson Park***

***Recycling Program***

**T**he Solid Waste Department will kick off the new Recycling Program in August. A great part of the program is that recyclables don't have to be separated. Just place them in the Recycling Cart and Waste Management will pick it up twice each month. Items that can be recycled include clear plastic milk jugs, any clear or green plastics such as soda or water bottles, office paper, newspaper aluminum, steel and cardboard. These items can all be placed in the same container.

Recycling makes good sense. It protects our environment and natural resources, helps create jobs and saves our communities money. To get started, please call 892-1200 to order a recycling cart. The program will begin in the North Valley and North Albuquerque Acres on August 1, 2005. The South Valley will come on-line in the next few months. Solid Waste and Recycling will cost \$13.81 per household per month. For more information call the Waste Management Recycling Call Center at 892-1200.

***Update On Golf Course Road Reconstruction***

**R**elief is in sight for the nearly 20,000 west side drivers who use Golf Course Road between Paradise Blvd. and Country Club Lane NW, not to mention the pedestrians and bikers. During the reconstruction of this segment of Golf Course it became apparent that underground utilities would have to be moved before major elements of the project could proceed. This caused a delay while sewer and water lines were relocated. Bernalillo County's contractor is once again proceeding at full speed ahead. The Golf Course Road reconstruction project is now scheduled to be completed in August.

The improvements include expanding the roadway from two to five lanes, including a center left turn lane, and adding bike lands, curbs, sidewalks, lighting and a storm water drainage system. The purpose of the project is 1) to improve access, traffic operations and safety; 2) to improve roadway drainage; and 3) to facilitate bicycle and pedestrian travel. The project will also provide continuity between the existing four-lane Golf Course Road, NW, south of Paradise Boulevard, NW, and the recently completed four-lane Golf Course Road, NW, north of Country Club Lane, NW.

Current average traffic count is 18,200 vehicles per day. Project construction is estimated to cost approximately \$3.3 million with funding being provided from Bernalillo County and the Federal Highway Administration. For more information, call Public Works at 848-1500.

## Featured Section

Whether through the Aquatics Department, Youth and Senior Services, the Community and Fitness Centers, or Special Programs, each and every day, thousands of Bernalillo County residents are having their lives enriched through the programs, services, and facilities of Bernalillo County's Parks and Recreation Department.

As the Land of Enchantment enjoys crystal blue skies, blazing sunshine and daily temperatures of 90 degrees and more, what better way for young and old to beat the heat and have a great time than taking a swim. And this year, Parks and Recreation is hosting swimmers at five aquatic facilities: Paradise Hills Aquatic Center, Alameda Pool, Rio Grande Pool, South Valley Pool, and the brand new Los Padillas Aquatic Center. All of our aquatic centers are clean and well supervised, and the Paradise Hills, Rio Grande and South Valley pools have wonderful special touches - be they water slides, colorful original murals, picnic tables, and/or proximity to parks and public transportation.

Fun at the pool is only one of the activities being enjoyed by youth ages 5-14 who are enrolled in Summer Recreation Program 2005. This seven week program runs from June 13th through July 29th and engages kids in a range of activities and field trips, including sports, roller skating, swimming, bowling, science days, putt-putt, wall climbing, arts & crafts, lip sync contests and talent shows. The regular program is 5-days per week from 9am to 3pm for seven weeks and costs only \$95. The extended program runs week-days for seven weeks from 7 am to 6 pm and costs \$200. Parks and Recreation works hard to provide the facilities and programs for all of this summer fun but they are useless without healthy and well-fed children to use them. Thus the Youth and Senior Services division offers a Free Summer Lunch Program for Children. The program runs from June 1st through July 29th with free lunches served from 11 am to 1 pm at 44 locations throughout the County.

Bernalillo County goes the extra mile for seniors too. Youth and Senior Services organize activities for seniors including field trips, social events, lunch, recreation, social services and opportunities. Lunch at each of the seven meal sites is served daily at 11:30 am with a suggested donation of only \$2.00. Hours are Monday-Friday 9 am to 2 pm at the Armijo, Mountain Community, Pajarito, Paradise Hills, Raymond G. Sanchez, and Rio Bravo Meal Sites, and same times but only Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at Whispering Pines Senior Meal Site. In addition to the swimming pools, community centers, recreation programs, fitness centers and lunches, Parks and Recreation has Special Programs, like the All Star Game at Isotopes Park. The department's "Dance, Dance, Dance, It's a Teen Thing" is now in its 10th year and is more popular than ever. This year the state's number one dance party for teens is being held at the Albuquerque Convention Center and attendance on June 24, 2005 was over 700. For more information, call 314-0400.

### ***New Aquatics Center is a BIG SPLASH with South Valley Residents***

Over 100 South Valley residents made some serious waves at the opening and dedication of Bernalillo County's new Los Padillas Aquatic Center, June 11th. The aquatic center, at 2141 Los Padillas SW, is dedicated to state Representative Henry "Kiki" Saavedra. Saavedra was instrumental in securing state funds for approximately half of the pool's \$2 million price tag. County general obligation bond money covered the other half.



"This is a great honor for me," says Representative Saavedra. "My family has lived in this area for generations and I'm proud to help bring such a wonderful facility to the community, especially to the youngsters. The aquatic center includes two adjoining pools. One is a five-foot deep lap pool cascading

into an activity pool that starts at zero depth and gently slopes to three feet, six inches deep. The activity pool has a children's play area including a spiral water slide and several colorful, splash-and-go water fountains.

A bright, twisting aluminum sculpture entitled 'Waterwave' spills over the fence's top. "This is a real community center where kids can play together, families can be together, people can celebrate together



and enjoy the summer," says Commissioner Teresa Cordova. Pool admission is \$3.50 for adults, \$2.50 for children ages 6 - 15, \$1 for tots five years old and younger, and \$1 for seniors ages 55 and above. An adult must accompany children under 11 months old. Two-week swimming lesson sessions are available for \$25. The aquatics center is open from noon to 5 p.m., seven days a week. For more information, call 873-1156.



### ***Metropolitan Assessment and Treatment Service Facility - Scheduled to Open***

**I**n the next several weeks, Bernalillo County will open MATS, the Metropolitan Assessment and Treatment Services facility. By purchasing and renovating the 47,000 square foot former Charter Hospital, the County is planning to dramatically transform the current limited five-day "Sobering Services" program, a 29-bed facility that provides a safe environment for alcohol and drug intoxicated individuals to detoxify from their drug use. A New Mexico first...In developing the MATS program, Bernalillo County will establish a centralized, medically managed detox, 28-day treatment and four to six month transitional housing program for public inebriates and low-income residents in crises. MATS effectively takes the "Sobering Services" program and creates a 132-bed full continuum of care program.

"MATS will become a hub for services making a real impact in breaking the alcohol or substance abuse addition cycle," says Commissioner Deanna Archuleta-Loeser. With funding support from all of the Bernalillo County legislators, the County will take the program one step further by constructing a transitional housing facility that will provide 48 additional beds on the self-contained six-acre site. This program is an essential adjunct to recovery and would allow for further outpatient treatment options as well as a stable, sober and supportive living environment for those leaving the 28-day treatment program that need continued support as they take steps to regain their lives in the community. The Metropolitan Assessment and Treatment Services (MATS) offers hope for a better life for those struggling with drug or alcohol addiction, which directly impacts their families and the community. MATS will make a difference in the lives of many for years to come.

### ***NM All Star Classic***

**T**he New Mexico All Star Classic Baseball Game may have ended in a 5-5 tie, but it was a win-win situation for everyone involved. "The New Mexico All Star Classic is a victory for everybody," says Bernalillo County Manager Thaddeus Lucero. "These young people are superb athletes who have worked hard to get where they are. They can showcase their talents and many of them receive full-ride college scholarships, and even get drafted by the major leagues. It's all about quality baseball in a beautiful park and having fun." Major league scouts, college coaches and hundreds of fans filled the stands at Albuquerque's Isotopes Park, June 13, for the All Star Classic double-header with the nationally televised All American Baseball Game. Bernalillo County Parks and Recreation Department coordinates the event. The national game features the cream of the crop from around the

country, including some of New Mexico's elite players. The state game highlights New Mexico's best players, not invited to play in the All American Game. The players are divided into East and West teams for both games. The state game got underway around 3 p.m., followed by the national game and a fireworks show to end the day. "It's really exciting and it really means a lot," says West team All Star Catcher and Rio Rancho Ram Justin Esquibel. "We're playing with the best." Esquibel, 18, has a full-ride baseball scholarship to Eastern Arizona University. He says the All Star athletes are grateful to Bernalillo County for making this event, and other youth activities, possible. Fox Sports Net televises the national All American Game, bringing significant attention to the All Stars and the community. Officials say the event has been a major success.